


CLAIMS LISTING

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application:

Claims 1-9 (Withdrawn).

10. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing an extrudable powder blend comprising the steps of:

(I) blending a mixture comprising the following components:

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- (a) from 30 to 65 weight percent of at least one chlorinated vinyl resin;
 - (b) from 0.25 to 5 weight percent of at least one thermal stabilizer;
 - (c) from 1.5 to 5 weight percent of at least one lubricant;
 - (d) from 3.5 to 15 weight percent of at least one high polymer processing aid; and
 - (e) from 24 to 65 weight percent of at least one cellulosic material containing moisture, based upon the total weight of the powder blend;


(II) raising the temperature above 50°C during the (I) blending step; and

(III) removing water vapor.

11. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 10 wherein the total amount of moisture in the extrudable powder blend after step (III) is below three weight percent, based upon the total weight of the powder blend.

12. (Original) The process according to claim 11 wherein the (a) at least one chlorinated vinyl resin and the (e) at least one cellulosic material are first blended at a temperature above 80°C before adding the (c) at least one lubricant.
13. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing an extrudable free-flowing powder blend comprising the steps of:
- (I) blending a mixture comprising the following components:
 - (a) from 40 to 55 weight percent of at least one PVC resin;
 - (b) from 0.5 to 1.5 weight percent of at least one thermal stabilizer;
 - (c) from 1.5 to 3 weight percent of at least one lubricant;
 - (d) from 5 to 10 weight percent of at least one high polymer processing aid;
 - (e) from 34 to 52 weight percent of at least one wood flour containing moisture;
 - (f) from 3 to 15 weight percent of at least one mineral filler; and
 - (g) up to 3 weight percent of at least one blowing agent, based upon the total weight of the powder blend;
 - (II) raising the temperature above 80°C during the (I) blending step; and
 - (III) removing water vapor so that the final moisture amount in of the powder blend is below 2.0 weight percent, based upon the total weight of the powder blend.

14. (Original) The process according to claim 13 wherein the (a) at least one PVC resin and the (e) at least one wood flour are first blended at a temperature above 80°C before adding the (c) at least one lubricant.
15. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 13 wherein the final moisture content is below one weight percent, based upon the total weight of the powder blend.
16. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 13 wherein the mixture further comprises up to 15 weight percent of at least one impact modifier, based upon the total weight of the powder blend.
17. (Currently Amended) The process according to claim 13 wherein the total amount of water added during the addition of components (a) through (f) is less than or equal to 25 weight percent, based upon the total weight of the powder blend.
18. (Original) The process according to claim 17 wherein at least one of the components (a) through (f) is supplied as a water-based dispersion.
19. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a foamed extrudate comprising the steps of:

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- (I) feeding an extrudable free-flowing powder blend, comprising at least one chlorinated vinyl resin, at least one blowing agent, and from 24 to 65 weight percent of at least one cellulosic material containing moisture, based upon the total weight of the powder blend, into an extruder;
 - (II) melting the powder blend to form a melt;
 - (III) extruding the melt from a die to form an expanding extrudate having at least one surface; and
 - (IV) hardening the surface of the expanding extrudate with a cooling fluid to increase the expansion ratio.

20. (Original) The process according to claim 19 wherein the cooling fluid is a gas directed away from the die surface and towards the surface of the extrudate.

Claims 21-23 (Withdrawn).
